

Message

From: EPA News [noreply@cision.com]
Sent: 10/27/2021 12:29:48 PM
To: Harris, Michael [harris.michael@epa.gov]
Subject: EPA Chicago - Daily Media Report - Wednesday, October 27, 2021

**EPA Chicago - Daily Media Report -
Wednesday, October 27, 2021**

Report Overview:

Total Clips (8)

Grants (2)







Water - Drinking (4)

Water - Surface (1)

Other (1)

Headline	Date	Outlet	Outlet State
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Grants (2)

 Lucas County among recipients of state water infrastructure grants	10/27/2021	Blade Online, The	OH	 
 Federal government addressing water industry qualified worker shortage	10/26/2021	WGVU News	MI	 

Water - Drinking (4)

 Dearborn assures residents it meets federal water safety levels	10/27/2021	Arab American News Online, The	MI	 
 In Benton Harbor's water crisis, a long history of systemic racism - and a chance for justice	10/26/2021	Detroit Metro Times Online	MI	 
 Ohio EPA reports increase of salt in drinking water	10/26/2021	Springfield News-Sun	OH	 
 Activist: Water filing forced gov's hand	10/25/2021	Detroit News, The	MI	 

Water - Surface (1)

 Potentially toxic algae issues spread in Michigan; The problem has no known remedies and can kill pets	10/26/2021	Detroit Free Press	MI	 
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Other (1)





Ohio's execution
protocol valid
without going
through rulemaking

10/26/2021

Akron Legal
News - Online OH



News Headline: Lucas County among recipients of state water infrastructure grants |  



News Date: 10/27/2021

Outlet Full Name: Blade Online, The

Outlet State: OH

News Text: ...water infrastructure grants to 54 projects, of which 11 are in northwest Ohio, according to the governor's office. Advertisement "This...

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News Headline: Federal government addressing water industry qualified worker shortage |  

News Date: 10/26/2021

Outlet Full Name: WGVU News

Outlet State: MI

News Text: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is investing \$3.8 million in developing the next generation of water professionals. A...

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News Headline: Dearborn assures residents it meets federal water safety levels |  


News Date: 10/27/2021

Outlet Full Name: Arab American News Online, The

Outlet State: MI

News Text: DEARBORN - After growing concerns over lead in drinking water in Hamtramck and Benton Harbor, the city of Dearborn is assuring...

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News Headline: In Benton Harbor's water crisis, a long history of systemic racism - and a chance for justice |  


News Date: 10/26/2021

Outlet Full Name: Detroit Metro Times Online

Outlet State: MI

News Text: click to enlarge Anna Gustafson/Michigan Advance Rev. Edward Pinkney at a water distribution in Benton Harbor Oct. 15. Every day, Elnora...

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News Headline: Ohio EPA reports increase of salt in drinking water | 

News Date: 10/26/2021

Outlet Full Name: Springfield News-Sun

Outlet State: OH

News Text: Oct. 26â€”There's more salt in local sources of drinking water now compared to 40 years ago, according to monitoring done by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, the Hamilton to New Baltimore Groundwater Consortium, the U.S. Geological Survey and the Miami Conservancy District.

However, experts said the quality of the water is still safe, but it's the long-term effect of salt in the water that has them concerned.

Although saline levels have increased, Clark County officials said they haven't had a chance to review the data.

"Anything that affects our water is worth monitoring," said Clark County Utilities Director Chuck Bauer. "We're committed to the protection of our source drinking water. Any activities that can prevent runoff from contaminating our ground water are a good thing."

Clark County produces water for about 30% of its customers, Bauer said. The remaining 70% is purchased from other water systems such as Springfield, Enon and North Hampton.

Experts say elevated saline levels could affect the health of fish and plants in local rivers, could corrode water pipes, and someday could even release metals like lead into drinking water via that corrosion.

"It's more something that we're just looking at as a deviation from its normal background concentrations, but not really at a level where it would cause health concerns at this point," said Richard Stuck, source water manager at Greater Cincinnati Water Works, one of the authors on a blog post noting the increases.

After the four agencies surveyed 70 wells in the area, 39 of them showed increasing trends in sodium and chloride levels, or at least periodic detections of elevated levels, according to the Miami Conservancy District.

The reason the salinity of the water is rising is due at least in part to the amount of road salt used on highways and roads, the Miami Conservancy District says, adding that there are ways to change that.

"Once the snow melts from the salt, that really salty water is pretty corrosive to metals and we worry that's a potential threat," said Mike Ekberg, manager of water resources monitoring and analysis at the Miami Conservancy District, who wrote about the increase in salt levels with Stuck.

What is increasing the salt levels?

Groundwater in the Miami Valley supplies water to an estimated 2.3 million people. The water that Miami Valley residents drink comes from the Great Miami Buried Aquifer. That aquifer is the water that moves between particles of dirt, stone and other earth underground.

Soil soaks up water from rain or other precipitation and carries all the impurities that might have washed into the groundwater with it to the aquifer and to the many rivers in the region.

Most communities in the Miami Valley use the aquifer as their source of drinking water in the region. Even off-grid well water taps into the Great Miami Buried Aquifer.

The Ohio Department of Transportation and other municipalities put a form of table salt on the roads to melt ice and snow in the winter. The salt people eat is in a more purified form.

When the snow melts, it brings the road salt with it into the soil, Ekberg said.

Among the other reasons cited for increased salt in groundwater were agricultural runoff and water softeners, with the agricultural issue more prominent in certain geographic areas.

Why is it harmful?

The water in the region is still safe for people to drink. But saltier water could cause problems in the water supply in the future, and could wreak havoc on the environment, the experts said.

Groundwater provides roughly 50% of the water that flows in the Great Miami River during a typical year, according to the Miami Conservancy District. So as the salinity of groundwater rises, so does the salt level of the Great Miami River.

Many fish, insects and plants depend on the water in the Great Miami River, Ekberg said. Some of those creatures and plants need the water to stay below a certain salinity level, or they won't be able to survive.

"There's a concern there that if that groundwater gets more and more salient, eventually, do we start to impact the fish, in the plant, the bug communities that live in the river," Ekberg said.

As for threats to human health, Ekberg and other scientists are concerned about the saltier water eroding the pipes in the region. Corrosive groundwater can attack the insides of pipes, which can release high levels of metals like lead into drinking water.

Ekberg said in Flint, Michigan, the city changed the source of the water, and the water moving through the pipes was more saline. The water corroded pipes and released lead into the drinking water.

If salt in the water is so bad, can't we just filter it out?

Ekberg said it's not that simple. The available technology to remove salt from the water is expensive and requires a lot of energy. It's easier to avoid getting too much salt in the water than trying to remove it later.

What can we do?

The best practice is just to salt the roads less in areas with less traffic, Ekberg said.

On highways, it makes sense to use salt and make sure that cars can get down the interstate safely. But Ekberg said that not all the salt applied is on highways. Sometimes it's on parking lots near soccer fields and other spaces that aren't used as much in the winter.

Ekberg said municipalities could also consider using less salt overall, especially near well fields, the places where there are several wells and cities source their water. The Miami Conservancy District can work with municipalities on that, he said.

"I think there's a lot of places in and around well fields in the Miami Valley where if we were honest with ourselves, we could get by with very much reduced application or maybe we don't even need to apply at all," Ekberg said.

There are also new forms of treating roads that don't require road salt, like cheese and pickle brine and de-sugared molasses.

Pre-treating roads with brine reduces the need for road salt.


The Consortium, a group of public water utilities and businesses that use groundwater in Butler County, reviewed and reduced the road salt application rate at a large parking lot near a wellfield, something that the Miami Conservancy District said is considered a best practice.

Bruce Whitteberry, assistant superintendent of the Water Quality Improvement Division at Cincinnati Waterworks, who is familiar with the research, said it's not just the Miami Valley who is having issues with more saline water. Cities in northern Ohio, Minnesota and other northern U.S. states are also seeing more salt in their water.

"This is something that cities and municipalities have been looking at, and have had issues with nationwide," Whitteberry said.

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News Headline: Activist: Water filing forced gov's hand | 

News Date: 10/25/2021

Outlet Full Name: Detroit News, The

Outlet State: MI

News Text: By Beth LeBlanc, , Craig Mauger, and Melissa Nann Burke

The Detroit News

A vocal Benton Harbor activist said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's administration has been "deceiving" in explaining what inspired expanded efforts to combat the southwest Michigan city's water crisis in recent weeks.

The Rev. Edward Pinkney, president of the Benton Harbor Community Water Council, said the true cause of the state's actions was an emergency petition filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Sept. 9. The filing asked the EPA to provide an immediate source of safe drinking water in schools and child care facilities in Benton Harbor.

"If we had not filed that petition, it would have been three, four more years in the Black city of Benton Harbor with nothing being done," Pinkney said during a taping of WKAR's "Off the Record" television show.

The filing with the EPA "forced" the Whitmer administration's hands, Pinkney said.

In the weeks following the petition, the state expanded access to bottled water in Benton Harbor, a city whose drinking water has been found to have elevated lead levels for three years.

In a statement Oct. 6, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services said the measures were being taken "out of an abundance of caution," and Benton Harbor residents were encouraged to use bottled water for cooking, drinking, brushing teeth, rinsing foods and mixing powdered infant formula.

During a Michigan House Oversight Committee hearing on Thursday, Eric Oswald, director of the water division within the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, suggested an issue with lead nanoparticles bypassing filters in New Jersey spurred the heightened sense of caution about the situation in Benton Harbor.

"Until we can validate that the filters are absolutely effective, we want to make sure we're cautious there," Oswald told lawmakers.

But Pinkney said it was the petition that "got the ball rolling." He noted that Whitmer's office announced a clean water initiative that included \$20 million in proposed funding to remove lead service lines in Benton Harbor on Sept. 8, a day before the petition was filed. Someone who knew about the petition had "leaked" information about it to Whitmer's team, Pinkney said.

"She got a heads-up from someone," he said.

Pinkney made the comment a day before Whitmer skipped a scheduled campaign stop in Virginia on Saturday morning after criticism from Republicans, who argued she should be focused on the water crisis in Benton Harbor. Whitmer's attendance was only tentative at the event in Arlington County ahead of Virginia's Nov. 2 gubernatorial election, said Maeve Coyle, communications director for Whitmer's campaign.

Moments of silence

Most of the Michigan delegation gathered Tuesday evening on the floor of the U.S. House to honor the memories of two former lawmakers who died the same week - former Reps. Dale Kildee of Flint and Dan Benishek of Crystal Falls.

They led the chamber in a moment of silence for the men. Kildee served 36 years in the House, retiring in 2013, and Benishek served six, retiring in 2017.

"He believed this place, this Congress and our government, could be a force for good," said Kildee's nephew, Rep. Dan Kildee, D-Flint Township.

"I think his greatest contribution was that he served here so long and left here with so many friends because he served here with dignity, with respect for everyone - regardless of their position or their point of view. I hope we can remember him for that."

Benishek's successor, Rep. Jack Bergman of Watersmeet, gave a tribute to "Dr. Dan," noting he loved to tell stories of his off-grid cabin where he ate off the land and what he had hunted.

"Dr. Dan's passing is a significant loss to our state. Those of us who call Michigan home have each benefited from his life and service, and are grateful for the impacts he made. He did make a difference. He loved the outdoors, like no one, you wouldn't believe," Bergman said. "He was a man truly of the Upper Peninsula."

Nessel takes dig at Trudeau

Attorney General Dana Nessel took to Twitter on Tuesday to express her displeasure with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his administration's stance on the future of Enbridge's Line 5 oil pipeline.

In response to a tweet that tagged the Plymouth Democrat and Canadian leader, Nessel asked that she not be included in future tweets with Trudeau.


"We're not on speaking terms right now and I've officially removed him from my list of 'Men I would date if I wasn't married and gay.' You're welcome @GavinNewsome," Nessel wrote, followed by a second tweet containing the hashtag "shutdownline5".

The social media message comes after Canada this month formally invoked treaty negotiations with the United States over Whitmer's plans to shutter the line. Canada has maintained such action would violate a 1977 treaty that prevents either country from interfering in transit pipelines that travel through both countries.

A lawyer for the government of Canada notified the court of its treaty invocation Oct. 4 and asked the judge to push pause on the case while negotiations ensue. The state of Michigan and Enbridge followed shortly thereafter with their own letters to the court for and against that pause.

U.S. District Judge Janet Neff chided the whole lot of them last week, striking the letters from the record on the basis that requests to the court should be in the form of motions or official briefs.

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News Headline: Potentially toxic algae issues spread in Michigan; The problem has no known remedies and can kill pets | 

News Date: 10/26/2021

Outlet Full Name: Detroit Free Press

Outlet State: MI

News Text: "If you believe predictions on climate, we would expect longer periods of blooms in the years to come."

Gary Kolhepp

EGLE's supervisor for the Lake Michigan Surface Water Assessment Section

MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP - Blue-green algae waits for long, sunny days and still waters to bloom, growing potentially toxic surface scum and settling like spilled paint on bodies of water around the world.

Most recently, it made its home in Lake Lansing.

Also called cyanobacteria, these single-celled microscopic organisms are natural components of lakes and ponds. The algae is usually harmless, and can even have health benefits in the form of the popular supplement spirulina.

But in the wrong conditions, blue-green algae blooms can grow rapidly and produce a dangerous toxin.

Blooms like the one in Lake Lansing surface every few months in Michigan, usually stretching into the fall. Gary Kolhepp, EGLE's supervisor for the Lake Michigan Surface Water Assessment Section, said there have been more reports in recent years.

"As temperatures get warmer, we have more hot days longer into the year," Kolhepp said. "If you believe predictions on climate, we would expect longer periods of blooms in the years to come."

After reports of the Lake Lansing bloom, EGLE ran rapid tests on two samples from different parts of the lake. Both

contained toxin levels above the limit deemed safe by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

However, it's not feasible to test for toxins at each reported bloom. Blooms can dissipate within days or weeks, and some that test under the EPA's level are perfectly capable of producing toxins at any time.

"Our motto is, when in doubt, stay out when you see a bloom," Kolhepp said. "Even if we go and test it and say the toxin is not present, that doesn't mean the toxin won't be there the next day, the next week, whatever."

The state started taking harmful algal blooms more seriously after the 2014 Toledo water crisis, where several blooms in the western basin of Lake Erie interrupted access to drinking water for hundreds of thousands in Toledo.

The algae has no known remedies and can be fatal to pets that ingest it, either by drinking the water or cleaning themselves off later. Dogs exposed to the algae have died or developed neurological conditions, with their eyes glazing over or becoming unresponsive, including otherwise healthy animals who then quickly deteriorated.

It's less dangerous for humans, with the most common symptoms being a rash or itchy skin that can be mitigated by washing off immediately after exposure.

A future with more cyanobacteria blooms could harm recreation at Lake Lansing. Basic precaution to avoid adverse health effects from cyanobacteria is to stay out of the water when present. That means lake swimming could be increasingly be at risk if the likely bloom window for blue-green algae continues to extend.

Additionally, Kolhepp said there's evidence cyanobacteria can become aerosolized and spread through the air when someone paddles through a bloom and breathes in potentially toxic particles. Those affected have reported feeling dizzy, nauseous and lightheaded, which could present safety hazards on a kayak or sailboat. Repeated exposure can result in liver damage.

Another factor that could be worsening blooms is the presence of zebra mussels, an established invasive species found in Michigan's lakes. When filter-feeding, they prefer nonharmful green algae and spit out the cyanobacteria, leaving them more space and food to aid growth.

Also, blooms are more likely to occur in nutrient-rich bodies of water - meaning considerably polluted. The additional detritus and runoff such as the nitrogen and phosphorus found in fertilizer feeds blue-green algae growth.

Younes Ishraidi, Meridian Township's chief engineer and a member of the Lake Lansing Advisory Committee, said this runoff is a particular issue due to Lake Lansing's lack of natural springs.

"It's really a bowl in the ground, and it gets runoff from the surrounding areas," he said. "Everything bad and good that goes into the water has an effect, since we don't have fresh water coming into the lake."

Suspicious looking algae should be reported to EGLE by calling the Environmental Assistance Center at 800-662-9278 or through AlgaeBloom@Michigan.gov



Contact reporter Annabel Aguiar at aaguiar@lsjnews.com or 517-449-8248.

"If you believe predictions on climate, we would expect longer periods of blooms in the years to come."

Gary Kolhepp

EGLE's supervisor for the Lake Michigan Surface Water Assessment Section

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News Headline: Ohio's execution protocol valid without going through rulemaking |  

News Date: 10/26/2021

Outlet Full Name: Akron Legal News - Online

Outlet State: OH

News Text: ...its 2015 decision in Fairfield Cty. Bd. of Commrs. v. Nally, when the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency adopted a new limit...

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